



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

JUN 16 2014

OFFICE OF
ENFORCEMENT AND
COMPLIANCE ASSURANCE

Ms. Mary Colligan
Assistant Regional Administrator for Protected Resources
National Marine Fisheries Service, Northeast Region
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

Dear Ms. Colligan:

In accordance with our responsibilities under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act and the National Environmental Policy Act, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) for Amending the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan: Vertical Line Rule (CEQ No. 20140146).

The purpose of the amendment to the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan regulations is to propose gear set modifications designed to reduce the risk of serious injury and mortality to Atlantic large whales due to incidental interactions with commercial fishing gear along the east coast.

EPA's comments on the Draft EIS rated the proposal as "LO- Lack of Objections." While the Final EIS has selected a new preferred alternative, we have reviewed the Final EIS and have not identified any potential environmental impacts requiring substantive changes to the proposed action, and we have no objections.

We appreciate the opportunity to review the FEIS. If you have any questions, please contact Julie Roemele at roemele.julie@epa.gov or 202-564-5632.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Susan E. Bromm". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Susan E. Bromm
Director
Office of Federal Activities